



Europäisch Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets



(11) EP 0 911 266 A2

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:
28.04.1999 Bulletin 1999/17

(51) Int Cl.⁶: B65D 5/42

(21) Application number: 98830459.8

(22) Date of filing: 28.07.1998

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

(72) Inventors:
• Farnesi, Flaminio
56100 Pisa (IT)
• Splacchi, Eugenio
56017 Gello, San Giuliano Terme (Pisa) (IT)

(30) Priority: 30.07.1997 IT FI970104 U
12.12.1997 IT FI970271

(74) Representative: Bardini, Marco Luigi et al
c/o Società Italiana Brevetti
Corso del Tintori, 25
50122 Firenze (IT)

(71) Applicant: Grafica Zannini s.r.l.
56014 Ospedaletto (Pisa) (IT)

(54) Container for pre-packed pharmaceutical products

(57) A container for pre-packed pharmaceutical products formed by a box-like envelope made of flexible material, having side walls (3) and base flaps (5, 6), suited to form the bottom and the cover thereof. Pre-cut tear lines (17) are formed in one of the side walls (3), defining

a respective foldable wall portion (18). A chamber (21) is provided inside the container, defined by the side wall in which the foldable portion (18) is formed and by an internal wall (14) parallel thereto, wherein a patient information leaflet (20) is housable to be reached by the customer without unsealing the package.

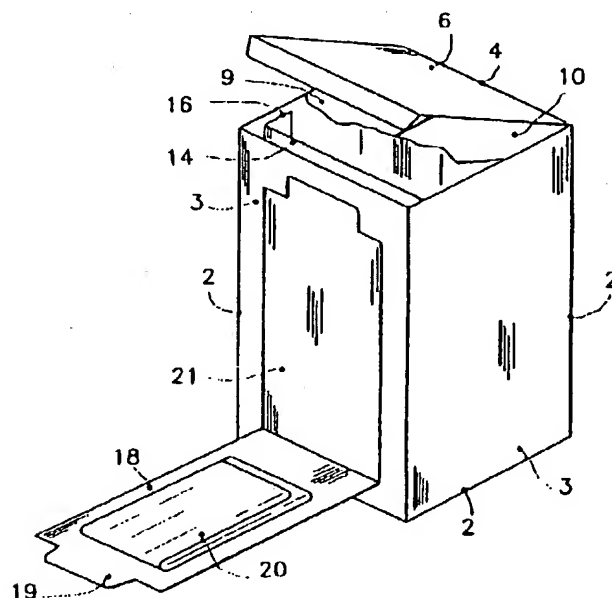


Fig. 2

EP 0 911 266 A2

Description

[0001] The present invention concerns the cardboard industry in general, and namely it relates to the production of containers, usually card packages, for pre-packed pharmaceutical products, i. e. provided in bottles, blisters, vials and other similar means.

[0002] As it is known, in almost all the cases pharmaceutical firms use, for packaging their products, ready-for-use material supplied by other companies. In particular, paper and printing companies supply the preprinted card containers and the patient information leaflets which accompany each product.

[0003] As for any other production field, also in the pharmaceutical field the possibilities of simplifying the production cycle, time shortening and lower labour use, are in high demand and continuous efforts are made to accomplish these results.

[0004] Besides, it can happen that the customer needs to know some information concerning the medicine, e.g. regarding particular side-effects or contra-indications, before deciding, in cooperation with the chemist, to purchase the product or not, or to preventively ascertain which the suggested doses are, all this without having to open the package, which in many cases is protected by a suitable guarantee seal set at the moment of the packaging.

[0005] It is an object of the present invention to provide a container for pre-packed pharmaceutical products which, though satisfying the above mentioned production needs, allows the access to the information leaflet without removing the package seal.

[0006] A particular object of the present invention is to provide a container of the above mentioned kind, wherein the access to the leaflet does not bring about the possibility of reaching the medicine placed therein.

[0007] These objects have been achieved with the container for pre-packed pharmaceutical products according to the present invention, of the kind formed by a box-like envelope made of flexible material, having side walls and base flaps suited to form the bottom and the cover of the container, characterized in that pre-cut tear lines are formed in one of the walls, defining at least one foldable wall portion, detachable along the lines and foldable outwards to allow the access to a folded patient information leaflet, placed in the container, without removing the package seal.

[0008] Preferably, the container comprises a chamber, defined by the wall in which the foldable portion is formed and by a wall parallel thereto inside the container, wherein the information leaflet is housable.

[0009] Other characteristics and advantages of the container for pre-packed pharmaceutical products according to the present invention will become apparent from the following description of its embodiments, made only as an example and not a limitation, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

- figure 1 shows a foldable blank for forming the container according to a first embodiment of the invention;
- figure 2 shows a side perspective view of the container made with the foldable blank of figure 1;
- figure 3 shows a foldable blank for forming the container according to a second embodiment of the invention;
- figure 4 shows a side perspective view of the container made with the foldable blank of figure 3.

[0010] With reference to figure 1 and 2, 1 generally indicates a foldable blank to form a first embodiment of the container according to the invention. It is made of a card sheet with pre-impressed transversal creasing lines 2, defining four side walls 3 of the container and a connection end flap 22, and pre-impressed longitudinal creasing lines 4 defining a base flap 5 and a cover flap 6, extending from respectively opposite edges of two non-adjacent side walls 3. Further flaps 7, 8, 9 and 10 extend from the edges of the remaining walls 3, on the same sides of flaps 5 and 6, along pre-impressed creasing lines 11.

[0011] A connection flap 12 extends from a creasing line 13 coincident with a transversal edge of an end side wall 3. A further wall 14 extends from flap 12, connected thereto along a transversal creasing line 15 and ending with a connection transversal flap 16. Pre-cut tear lines 17 are formed in one of the side wall 3, following a substantially U-shaped path, with two transversal parallel segments and a connection segment therebetween along which a tab 19 is formed. Tear lines 17 define a wall portion 18, detachable along them and foldable outwards.

[0012] The container shown in figure 2 can be obviously made on the basis of the foldable blank of figure 1. It will be apparent in particular that inside the container connection flap 12, folded along creasing line 13, lies upon side wall 3 adjacent to the wall in which foldable portion 18 is formed. Flap 12 is shorter than the width of the corresponding side wall 3, so that internal wall 14, orthogonally extending from connection flap 12 along line 15, defines in cooperation with side wall 3 provided with foldable portion 18 a chamber 21, being deep enough to house an information leaflet. This can be fixed either to the internal face of foldable portion 18, as in the depicted example, or to the outward face of internal wall 14. Otherwise, it can be let loose within chamber 21. Internal wall 14 is then glued to a side wall 3 adjacent to that where the foldable portion 18 is formed, by means of connection flap 16. As an alternative, connection flap 12 with internal wall 14, instead of being integral to the basic sheet, can be a separate piece, to be glued to the corresponding side wall 3 straight in the mounting position, i.e. lying upon said wall.

[0013] To reach information leaflet 20, it is sufficient to pull tab 19 and tear the foldable portion along pre-cut tear lines 17, in order to make portion 18 turn substan-

tially around the opposite side to that with tab 19, until it is revolved as in figure 2. In this way, even if foldable wall portion 18 has been detached to permit the access to chamber 21 where information leaflet 20 is housed, the medicine still remains enclosed in a separate housing and it can not be reached unless the package seal is removed.

[0014] It will be apparent that the proposed solution can be applied also to containers having a different shape, e.g. a rectangular section, even flat, parallelepiped. Besides, foldable portion 18 can be formed in any side wall defining the container. In an analogous way, pull tab 19 can be provided on any edge of foldable portion 18, being clear that the side around which said portion has to be turned is opposite to that having tab 19.

[0015] Whenever it is suggested by simplicity and economy needs, the container according to the invention can lack of internal wall, according to the embodiment shown in figures 3 and 4. The structure of the container according to this solution is not described in detail since it is generally analogous to that of the above described one, and so it can be immediately comprehended on the basis of the drawings, wherein corresponding elements to those of the first embodiment have the same reference numerals. It is sufficient to stress how in this case in foldable blank 1, creasing lines 2 simply define four side walls 3, in one of which foldable wall portion 18 with tab 19 is formed. However, information leaflet 20 has necessarily to be fixed to the inside face of foldable portion 18, to prevent its free movement inside the container and to allow its easy reaching and reviewing. This solution, even if is not the preferred one, still guarantees the customer against possible damages to the integrity of the medicine, because in any case they can not be accomplished without unsealing the package.

[0016] Other variations and/or modifications can be brought to the container for pharmaceutical products according to the present invention, without departing from the scope of the invention itself, as stated in the appended claims.

Claims

1. A container for pre-packed pharmaceutical products, formed by a box-like envelope made of flexible material, having side walls (3) and base flaps (5, 6) suited to form the bottom and the cover thereof, characterised in that pre-cut tear lines (17) are formed in at least one of said side walls (3), defining a respective foldable wall portion (18), detachable along said lines (17) and foldable outwards to allow the access to a folded patient information leaflet (20), placed in said envelope, without removing the package seal.
2. The container according to claim 1, comprising a

chamber (21), defined by the wall (3) in which said foldable portion (18) is formed and by an internal wall (14) parallel thereto inside the container, said information leaflet (20) being housable within said chamber (21).

3. The container according to the previous claims, wherein three consecutive pre-cut tear lines (17) are formed in the respective side wall (3), one of them following a path which defines a tab (19), seizable between the fingers to tear said foldable portion (18) and fold it outwards around the opposite side to that in which said tab (19) formed.
4. The container according to the previous claims, wherein said information leaflet (20) is removably fixed to said foldable wall portion (18).
5. The container according to claims 2 or 3, wherein said information leaflet (20) is freely placed within said chamber (21).
6. The container according to claims 2 or 3, wherein said information leaflet (20) is removably fixed to said internal wall (14).
7. The container according to the previous claims, wherein said internal wall (14) is connected to the two side walls (3) adjacent to that in which said foldable wall portion (18) is formed.
8. The container according to the previous claims, wherein said internal wall (14) is connected to a side wall (3) adjacent to that in which said foldable wall portion (18) is formed, by means of a connection flap (12) shorter than the width of the same side wall (3).

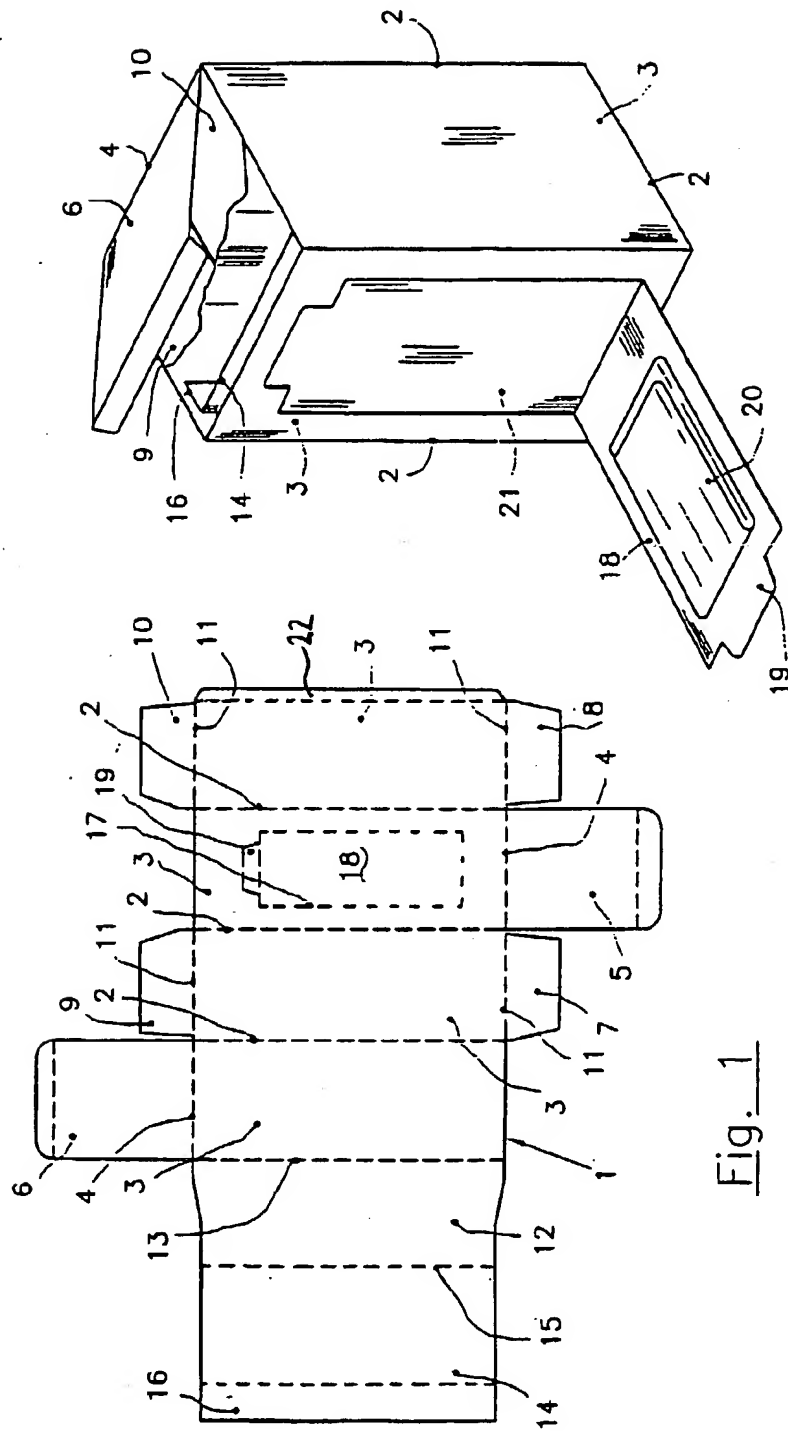


Fig. 2

Fig. 1

Fig. 4

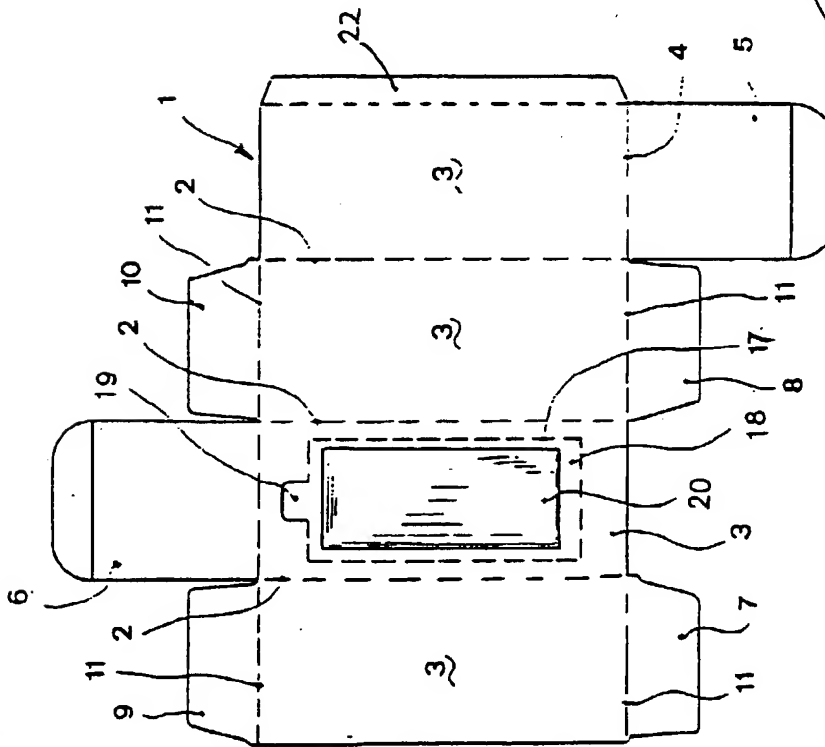
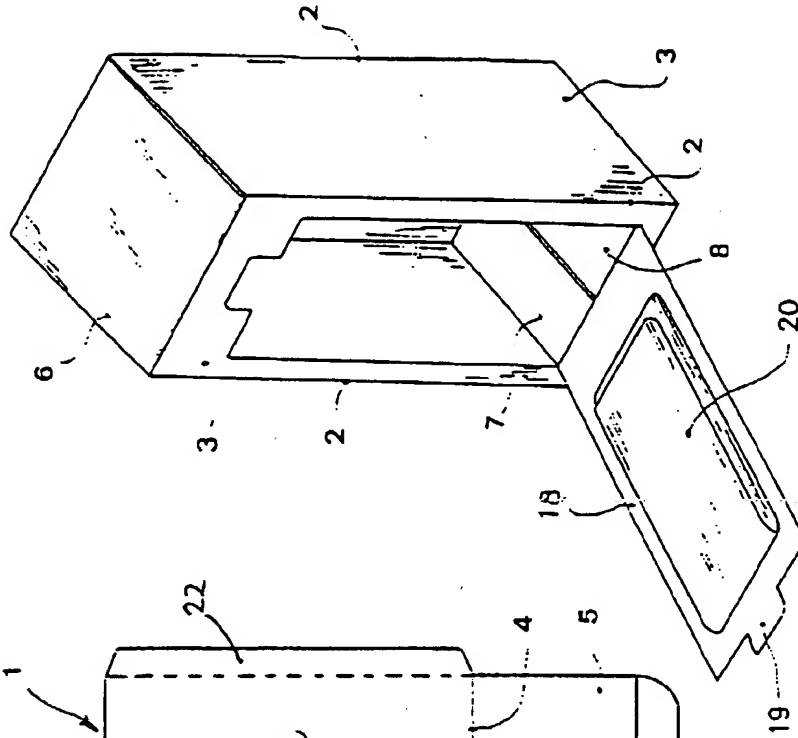


Fig. 3